

# Montana Chef Competition Culinary Excellence Award Silver Class: First Course

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**Recipe Name:** Grilled Lamb Tenderloin, Baby Fennel Salad with Mint Vinaigrette, Shiitake Ragout and Cherry Wine Glace

**Chef:** John D. Flach

**Restaurant:** [By Word of Mouth Restaurant and Catering](#)



**Montana Ingredients:** Gallatin Valley Botanical greens, [Lolo Peak Winery](#) wine, [Montola](#) canola oil, Wild Bee honey, [Garden City Fungi](#) mushrooms and [On Thyme Gourmet](#) herbs.

**Yield:** 4 Salads

## **Chef Profile:**

John Flach, chef and owner of By Word of Mount Restaurant and Catering, 2815 Aspen Dr., Big Sky, received a Silver Class award in the Culinary Excellence Award program held recently at Buck's T-4 Lodge in Big Sky.

Flach has been in the restaurant business for 26 years, nine of them at the same location. His Silver Class award was in the appetizer category for a creation titled: Grilled Lamb Tenderloin, Baby Fennel Salad with Mint Vinaigrette, Shiitake Ragout and Cherry Wine Glace. (See recipe.)

His advice to aspiring cooks: "Cooking is not an exact science. If you don't have an ingredient, substitute or improvise. The difficult you can do right away, the impossible will take a little bit longer."

## **Amount      Ingredients**

### **Grilled lamb tenderloin and baby fennel salad**

8 oz.	Lamb tenderloin
4 each	Gallatin Valley Botanical Baby Fennel
3 oz.	Gallatin Valley Botanical Mixed Greens
8 each	Gallatin Valley Botanical Baby Beets
2 fl. oz.	<a href="#">Lolo Peak Winery</a> Cherry Glace – see recipe
2 fl. oz.	Fresh mint vinaigrette – see recipe
4 fl. oz.	Shiitake Ragout – see recipe

### **Mint Vinaigrette**

8 fl. oz.	White vinegar
2 Tbsp	Gallatin Valley Botanical Fresh Mint, chopped

1 Tbsp           Dijon mustard  
12 fl. oz.       [Montola](#) Canola oil  
Wild Bee Honey, to taste

### **Shiitake Ragout**

2 lb.           [Garden City Fungi](#) Shiitake Mushrooms  
4 sprigs       [On Thyme Gourmet](#) fresh rosemary  
1 fl. oz.       Olive oil  
2 fl. oz.       Balsamic vinegar  
4 fl. oz.       White wine  
8 fl. oz.       Vegetable stock

### **Cherry Wine Glace**

4 bottles       [Lolo Peak Winery](#) Cherry Wine  
1 Tbsp       Black peppercorns  
4 sprigs       Gallatin Valley Botanical Fresh Mint

**Garnishes:** Pea tendrils; fennel leaves; and roasted baby beets.

### **Method:**

#### **Grilled Lamb Tenderloin and Baby Fennel Salad**

Preheat broiler or BBQ grill. Clean silver skin from lamb tenderloin. Portion tenderloin into 2 oz. portions, then season with kosher salt and fresh ground pepper. Clean fennel by removing leaves, save for garnish. Brush with olive oil and season with kosher salt and fresh ground pepper. Clean beets thoroughly to remove dirt and root. Clip leaves ½ inch above beet, save for salad mix. Brush with olive oil and season with kosher salt and fresh ground pepper. Slowly grill fennel and beets until soft and dark brown. Grill lamb tenderloin to medium-rare, approximately 4 minutes. Toss greens with mint vinaigrette. Slice fennel in half, quarter beets, and slice lamb tenderloin. Plate salad.

#### **Mint Vinaigrette**

In food processor, combine vinegar, mint and Dijon mustard. While processor is running, slowly add oil until it is emulsified. Then add honey one tablespoon at a time until vinaigrette is slightly sweet.

#### **Shiitake Ragout**

Quarter mushrooms. Heat olive oil, sauté mushrooms and rosemary sprigs. Remove rosemary. Deglaze pan with vinegar and wine. Reduce liquid by half, then add stock. Cook and reduce to sauce consistency. Season kosher salt and fresh ground pepper.

#### **Cherry Wine Glace**

Combine wine, peppercorns and mint in 8-quart saucepan. Bring to a boil. Turn down heat and reduce liquid to a syrup.

**Presentation / Plating Notes:** Plate on 10 inch round plate. Place greens down, top greens with fennel halves. Place sliced lamb tenderloin on fennel halves. Top lamb with shiitake ragout. Drizzle cherry wine glaze over lamb, shiitake ragout and around base of greens. Garnish plate with quartered beets and cherry wine glaze. Top salad with pea tendrils and fennel leaves.